



U.S. Department of Justice

Ronald C. Machen Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

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For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

(202) 252-6933

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Virginia Man Sentenced For Traveling From Virginia to D.C. To Have Sex With Under-Aged Child

WASHINGTON - Joseph Laslie, 42, of Lebanon, Va., was sentenced today to 11 years and three months in prison for traveling interstate to engage in illicit sexual conduct, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr., James W. McJunkin, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office, and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

Laslie pled guilty in March 2010 and was sentenced today by the Honorable Emmet G. Sullivan in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Judge Sullivan ordered that Laslie be placed on ten years of supervised release upon completion of his prison term.

According to a factual proffer of evidence presented during the plea hearing, on January 14, 2010, an MPD member of the FBI's Child Exploitation Task Force, operating undercover and posing as a pedophile as part of the investigation, communicated with the defendant by instant messenger.

During the course of the communication, Laslie expressed interest in meeting an under-aged girl and engaging in sexual contact with her. During instant messenger conversations over the next several days, Laslie continued to express his interest. On January 26, 2010, he traveled from Virginia to a pre-arranged meeting place in Washington, D.C. When he arrived at the meeting time and place, he was stopped and placed under arrest.

This case was brought as part of the Department of Justice's Project Safe Childhood initiative and investigated by the FBI's Child Exploitation Task Force, which includes members of the Metropolitan Police Department.

In February 2006, the Attorney General created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorney's Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as

identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafchildhood.gov.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen, Assistant Director McJunkin, and Chief Lanier commended MPD Detectives Timothy Palchak, Miguel Miranda, Jonathan Andrews, and Morani Hines, and the entire FBI Child Exploitation Task Force. They also commended Assistant United States Attorneys Cassidy Kesler Pinegar and David B. Kent, who prosecuted this case.

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